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For more information please visit: International Scientific Cooperation

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OECD Promotes Policy-Makers and Scientists Interactions

More than 100 researchers and managers discussed in Prague, April 6-8, 2009, the challenges for agriculture on the eve of the new OECD Sponsorship Programme 2010-2014. Participants included Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist International, AAFC, Gerrit Meester, OECD Chair of the Committee for Agriculture and Michel Dodet, OECD Chair of the Governing Body of the Co-operative Research Programme. As governments and stakeholders are more and more preoccupied with the stability of the food system, policy-makers and researchers see the need to work together to ensure the relevance of research in agriculture and food. The challenges of soil and water management and pest control remain important and should continue to be a priority even if biotechnologies are processing rapidly. More information on the Cooperative Research Program can be found at http://www.oecd.org/agriculture.

The Sponsorship Programme supports financially the exchange of scientists among OECD countries and the organization of workshops on specific themes: 1) the Natural Resources Challenge; 2) the Sustainability in Practice; and 3) the Food Chain.

Contact: Yvon Martel

Genome Prairie Planning a Network on Wheat and Canola

Ervin Balázs (Hungary), Gerrit Meester (Netherlands), Michel Dodet, Chair (France), Yvon Martel (Canada) and Wilfrid Legg (OECD)

Genomics with Germany

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Canadian cooperation with Germany on genomics is progressing well and there is a growing interest to develop a cooperation that could include different partners from each country. Dr. Wilf Keller, President and CEO, Genome Prairie, visited the International Scientific Cooperation Bureau on March 30, 2009 to discuss possible options and indicated that there could be an interest in using the model that AAFC, Genome Prairie and Genome Alberta used in 2008 for the European initiative called "ERA-Net Plant Genomics". For more information regarding this initiative, the website link is http://www.erapg.org/everyone/9587/17060/17879. Dr. Keller will consult other Canadian partners and develop a "concept" that could enhance the national and international scientific cooperation in genomic research related to disease resistance in high quality wheat and meal quality for canola.

Contact: Yvon Martel

Integrating Canadian Scientific Cooperation with the European Research Area (ERA)

Dr. Garth Williams, Director of the European Research Area and Canada (ERA-Can), visited AAFC on April 14, 2009 to discuss the status and the integration of Canadian scientific cooperation with the European Commission (EC). ERA-Can is a collaborative international initiative to increase science and technology cooperation between Canada and the Seventh Framework Programme

Yvon Martel and Wilf Keller

(FP7) of the European Union (EU). It is based in Ottawa. AAFC has already established cooperation with EC under Theme 2 of FP7 entitled "Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology". It includes areas of plant genomic, food allergy, bioproducts, and food for health. Both ERA-Can and AAFC will work together in the coming years to expand existing cooperation and integrate the strategy and information needed to ensure the success of the cooperation with Europe which overall represent one third of all the research done in the world.

Yvon Martel and Garth Williams

Contact: Yvon Martel

Laval University discussed International Scientific Exchange

The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences at Laval University, Dr Jean-Paul Laforest, and Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist, AAFC discussed international cooperation of common interest. Laval University is naturally interested in scientific exchange cooperation with the francophone countries, starting with France. In addition, cooperation with China in the field of education is of interest to Laval University and is complementary to scientific cooperation conducted by AAFC. The joint involvement of both Canadian universities and AAFC make cooperation with Canada more attractive to other countries.

Ibrahim Shaqir and Yvon Martel
Contact: Yvon Martel

Sharing experience with COST, European Union

Want to meet new researchers, discuss topics of global nature and establish new liaisons with European colleagues? Then the "European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research" - COST, may be of interest to you. COST provides funding for various Action Projects, which allows information to be exchanged and activities to be coordinated with the help of conferences and publications.

As a precursor of advanced multidisciplinary research, COST plays a very important role in building an European Research Area (ERA). It anticipates and complements the activities of the EU Framework Programmes, constituting a bridge towards the scientific communities of emerging countries. It also increases the mobility of researchers across Europe and fosters the establishment of scientific excellence in nine key domains.

Dr. Jean-Pierre Prive, AAFC scientist, was fortunately invited as a keynote speaker for COST in Sofia, Bulgaria from March 9-11, 2009. The conference he attended was entitled "Biotic and abiotic stress prevention in integrated berry fruit production" and was part of COST-Action 863: "Euroberry Research: from Genomics to Sustainable Production, Quality and Health". The COST Bulgaria workshop pertained to the Food and Agriculture domain and was typical of many scientific programs; the invited speaker provided a stimulating and introductory presentation to launch the workshop followed by a couple of days of presentations by scientists from the various European research establishments, 12 COST-member countries in this case. Talks were followed by very informative, informal and engaging discussions. New friendships and collaboration were created, as stated by Dr Prive : I was also fortunate to establish some scientific collaboration that has already helped my research program since my return to Canada. On the last day of the scientific program, brainstorming sessions were held to determine the future directions of COST 863 as it prepared itself for a new era of financing. All in all, Dr Prive had only a very positive experience with COST including the prompt reimbursement of his financial expenditures. Anyone interested, can visit the COST website for further information.

The participants to the COST workshop on "Biotic and abiotic stress prevention in integrated berry fruit production"
Contact: Jean-Pierre Prive

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